

CABLES FAQs + INFO

I would like to order some cables, please. What information do you need from me?

I will ask you the following questions:

- ✓ What type of plug do you need? Find out if it is a Lemo, Hirose, XLR or whatever.
- ✓ Is it male or female?
- ✓ How many pins does it have?
- ✓ Go through the same process for the plug on the other end.
- ✓ How long do you want it? Please measure it - don't guess. Most estimates for short cables are about 300% short! We cannot just make it longer if you are wrong.
- ✓ What are you using it for?

A WORD OF ADVICE ABOUT MEASURING !!

People often under-estimate the length of cable they require. You might think you only need 6 inches, but you may be amazed to find you actually need more like 24 inches! Really, the shortest possible usable cable is 12 inches - that's why our standard ones are at 18 inches.

Do remember:

Every bend, curve or loop adds several inches. If the cable has to curve at all before it goes into the back of the plug, that's about another 3 inches.

A good way to think of this is to remember your old school maths lessons about Pi which, as you are sure to recall, equals 3.142 - hence your 3 inches for every curve. Bingo!

Probably, you need your cable to be about three times as long as you first thought.

The cost of mistakes:

If you ask us for a certain length, only to find it is too short, there is no way we can actually make it longer! It means dismantling it and re-make another new cable to the correct length, which actually works out an expensive operation.

Sorry, but...

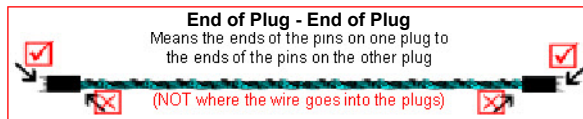
...our beautifully made cable ain't elastic. It don't stretch! Nor is it a willy that will grow if you stick on one of those patches that you can buy via all those spam Emails you keep getting!

The moral of this story is:

Please, please, please - do measure before you order. If you are not absolutely sure, use a bit of string - wind the string around all the bends and curves (especially if you are measuring for a microphone in a suspension), and make sure you allow for it to go into plugs, which have to go into sockets, and measure it all carefully before you call us.

And another important thing to remember:

When we talk about measuring the length of a cable, what we mean is measuring the cable from the end of the plug - where the pins are - to the end of the plug on the other. (Not, as is commonly presumed, from where the cables goes into the plug).



Just to illustrate the point, an XLR lead will give you a 4 inch difference, depending on how you measure it.

Will you really custom build any cable ?

Custom cable lengths are no problem - we will make you just about any length of cable you wish to order.

When comparing prices don't forget very few people will make you a 10.5 inch BNC with a right-angled plug on one end at any price and certainly not with the same day delivery!

We would also ask you to remember that we do not use cheap cable or connectors:

- ✓ NO cheap crimp BNC's that only last five minutes
- ✓ NO cheap XLR's
- ✓ ONLY genuine Neutrik with gold pins
- ✓ ALL pins individually heatshrinked, etc

We have recently had to rationalise the range of cables we do make. In the past we have custom made many cables with completely oddball connectors that proved to be very time consuming to track down and order. We have also ended up with stocks of very expensive, little used plugs that we will never sell.

Our basic philosophy now is to make any cable that connects Black Box Video equipment together, plus some industry standard cables that are not going to go out of fashion next week. So, we will make

- ✓ BNC's with three cable thicknesses, most power cables
- ✓ XLR4's
- ✓ HRS4's
- ✓ Power Tap + PAG
- ✓ Microphone leads (mono and stereo)
- ✓ HRS10 and Tajimi 12 umbilicals, etc

in any length and to order - all of the very finest quality.

Please note that we no longer fit or re-fit Lemo plugs to radio mics.

Remember - check with us first before sending off cables for repair to make sure we are prepared to accept the job.

Why are your cables so expensive ? I can get them much cheaper elsewhere.

We accept that it is probably possible to buy your standard cables cheaper elsewhere. However, for the same reasons as given in the previous question, the cost of using the best quality cable and connectors does have to be covered. Likewise, the workmanship and expertise involved should also be recognised.

What is the difference between a Lemo and a Hirose plug? How can I tell?

Many clients use the names Lemo and Hirose interchangeably as if they were the same plug. They are made by completely different manufacturers: Lemo in Switzerland and Hirose in Japan. None of the plugs made by either of these manufacturers are in any way compatible. It is obviously very important that we know which plug you mean when you are ordering your cables, as if we fit the wrong one the cable will be completely useless!

The giveaway is that Lemo plugs have the word "Lemo" stamped on them! They also carry the plug family number too, since there are about 80,000 possible Lemo plug combinations possible. Surprisingly, Hirose plugs don't carry the Hirose name.

Why don't you include the cables with your Time Code and Video Sender units ?

Firstly, everybody wants different cables. Then people want different lengths as well. When it comes to BNC's, some want straight, some want right-angled, some want thin cable, some want thick, and so on. To cater for all these whims we would have to bundle so many cables with each unit that the cost of the cables would far exceed the cost of the unit! Also, most hire companies make their own cables in-house and certainly don't want to be lumbered with unnecessary costs and lots of unwanted leads. Many Freelancers will also have plenty of BNC's and power leads anyway. We know most of you want the lowest price for our units and prefer to order any custom cables they may need separately.

CABLE REPAIRS:

- For a number of years we have repaired cables at greatly subsidised prices - unfortunately, we cannot continue to do so. Please be aware that there must now be a minimum charge of £20 for any cable repair.
- We cannot repair any cables made by other manufacturers.

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